

Book	Policy Manual
Section	Chapter 1 - Board of Education
Title	Public Participation at Board Meetings
Code	1-12
Status	Active
Adopted	December 21, 1992
Last Revised	April 5, 2022
Prior Revised Dates	03/07/1995; 12/03/1996; 02/04/1997; 03/02/1999; 03/04/2003; 03/21/2006; 03/06/2012; 09/04/2012; 02/04/2020; 06/01/2021; 09/07/2021;

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS

Board meetings are conducted for the purpose of carrying on the official business of the school district. The public is cordially invited to attend Board meetings to observe the Board as it conducts its official business.

The Board, as an elected representative body of the school district, also wishes to provide a forum for citizens to express interests and concerns related to the school district. To provide an opportunity for input while conducting an orderly meeting, individuals or groups may be heard by the Board in accordance with this policy or policy 1-13 Public Hearings.

REQUESTS TO PLACE ITEM ON THE AGENDA

In order that the Board may fairly and adequately discharge its overall responsibility, citizens desiring an item to be placed on the agenda for a specific Board meeting should direct written requests to the Superintendent at least seven (7) working days prior to the meeting.

The request should include:

- the name and address of the person or persons making the request;
- the organization or group, if any, represented; and
- brief explanation of the nature of the item. Questions and/or materials to be presented to the Board are to be submitted along with the request.

Additional items may be added to the agenda by the Board on a two-thirds vote of the Board members.

The Superintendent will confer with the Chairperson of the Board concerning whether to approve placing the requested item on the agenda, and to determine the appropriate meeting for such discussion.

The Superintendent, with the consent of the Board Chairperson, will accept or deny a request for inclusion on the agenda for any reason determined appropriate by the Superintendent and Chairperson.

The Superintendent will explain any other processes available for addressing the concerns.

The Superintendent will notify the requesting party of the response to the request. The Board may, by two-thirds vote and notwithstanding prior denial by the Superintendent, consent to hear a presentation where the appeal to speak is made immediately prior to or during the course of the meeting.

REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

A part of each regularly scheduled Board meeting will be set aside for citizens to address the Board through public comment. If the Board does not hold a regular meeting during a month, the Board will not provide a time for public comment at any other meeting held during that month. The following is the procedure for the public comment period:

1. The Board regularly sets aside thirty-minutes for public comment. Each speaker will be allotted three (3) minutes for comments.
2. The sign-up list will be limited by the initial thirty-minute time allotted to speakers. A waitlist will be collected. In the event a waiting list exists a maximum of 60 minutes will be authorized. Speakers will also be allowed to sign up at the meeting to

speakers. Residents, parents, students, and employees of the district will receive priority on the list of speakers.

3. If a speaker is unable to present his or her information within the specified time allotted, the speaker may provide the Board with the information in written form. Any handouts will not be distributed to the Board but will be left at the podium to be distributed at the close of the meeting.
4. The Board may provide for the designation of spokesperson for groups of persons supporting or opposing the same position.
5. The Board may provide for the selection of delegates from groups of persons supporting or opposing the same positions when the number of persons wishing to attend the meeting exceeds the capacity of the meeting room.
6. If a speaker chooses not to speak or is not present at the time he or she is called, the Chair will move to the next speaker on the list.
7. The Board will establish a method for keeping track of the time. Speakers shall stay within the time limit.
8. The individual listed on the sign-up sheet must be the individual addressing the Board of Education.
9. Speakers may not give their time to another speaker or trade their time slot with another speaker.
10. Speakers are welcome to offer comments or criticism directed at substantive ideas, actions, or procedures of the Board and individual Board members. In the interest of maintaining civility and decorum, however, speakers are encouraged to refrain from personal attacks and insults directed at the Board, individual Board members, staff, or members of the general public.
11. The laws and policies of North Carolina provide that issues or concerns involving individual personnel matters are confidential, and therefore, not appropriate for public comment settings. Concerns related to personnel issues may be addressed through applicable district personnel, the grievance policy, or other applicable policies. The Board chair will identify these persons at the beginning of the public comment period.
12. Speakers, including students, may discuss issues and matters of general concern, but should refrain from discussing confidential student information. Concerns related to confidential student matters may be addressed through applicable district personnel, the grievance policy or other applicable policies.
13. The Board will not hear vendor solicitations during public comments. All such solicitations shall be addressed through the applicable district personnel.
14. No sign shall encroach upon or obstruct the view of others.
15. Board members will not respond to individuals who address the Board; however, Board members may address the Chairperson to request further clarification. In response the Chairperson may direct the Superintendent to investigate concerns and respond appropriately to the presenter.
16. Visitors may not take part in Board discussions by asking questions or making comments.
17. Persons who willfully interrupt, disrupt, or cause disturbances at an official meeting may be directed to leave by the presiding officer. Members of the audience should show respect for the speakers by refraining from loud comments or other disruptions. Disruptions by any person or persons of a public meeting will be subject to action in accordance with [G.S. 143-318.17](#).

Citizens wishing to be placed on a list of speakers for a Board meeting must include the following information in their report:

- Name, address, and phone number of person(s) who desires to appear before the Board.
 - A brief statement describing the nature of the business to be brought to the Board.
 - Persons wanting to speak shall use the district's on-line platform available on the Board of Education page under "Public Comments". A sign-up sheet will also be available until fifteen minutes prior to the announced start time of the meeting for any individual to indicate a desire to address the Board. Speakers will only be placed on the list for the upcoming meeting. Speakers may sign up for the next public comment period once the on-line platform opens on the day following each regularly scheduled monthly Board meeting.
18. At any time, the Board may establish additional procedures to ensure that public comment sessions proceed in an efficient and orderly manner.

REPORTS OF COMPLAINTS

Complaints about the performance of school personnel, implementation of Board policy, the quality of the educational program or school facilities should be submitted initially for a response to the school district official responsible for the program or facility or to the Superintendent. The Superintendent or designee will make available this Board policy and other relevant grievance procedures to any individual or group submitting a complaint.

Legal [N.C.G.S. 143-318\(a\)\(1\) & \(6\);](#)
[G.S. 143-318.17](#)
[N.C.G.S. 143-318.10](#)
[N.C.G.S. 115C-36, -51](#)

[illegible]